

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated December 11, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response extended three months and set to expire on June 11, 2007. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 33 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Applicants have canceled claim 33, without prejudice. Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 28 and 30-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over *Maxfield et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,597,969). Applicants have canceled claims 28 and 30-34, without prejudice. Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 28-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Maxfield et al.* in view of *Mihalik* (U.S. Patent No. 6,340,672). Applicants have canceled claims 28-34, without prejudice. Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection.

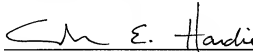
Allowable Claims

Claims 1-18 and 21-27 are allowed. Applicants acknowledge allowance of these claims.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "C. E. Hardie", is written over a horizontal line.

Chance E. Hardie
Registration No. 55,247
PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicants